

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

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FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2483

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: AFM DENIES IT IS PROMOTING ONE PARTY STATE

1. IN HIS LAST WEEKLY PRESS CONFERENCE FOR FOREIGN JOURNALISTS, COMMUNICATIONS MINISTER CORREIA JESUINO REPORTEDLY STATED THAT THE AFM CONSIDERS THE CREATION OF POLITICAL PARTIES "AN ERROR." JESUINO'S OFFICES RELEASED A COMMUNIQUE APRIL 14 DENYING THAT HE MADE SUCH A STATEMENT. ACCORDING TO THE COMMUNIQUE, THE MINISTER STATED THAT THE AFM DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT THE BEHAVIOUR OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES SINCE THE APRIL 25 COUP HAS BEEN CONSTRUCTIVE, AND THAT PARTISAN INTERESTS HAVE BEEN PUT BEFORE THOSE OF THE NATION. HE DID NOT STATE THAT THE AFM FEELS THE CONSTITUTION OF PARTIES WAS AN ERROR. THE AFM BELIEVES THAT

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THE FORMATION OF PARTIES IS A FUNDAMENTAL STEP TOWARDS DEMOCRACY, A STEP OF WHICH THE AFM IS PROUD.

2. JESUINO ALSO DENIED FOREIGN PRESS REPORTS THAT THE AFM SEEKS

TO PROMOTE A ONE PARTY REGIME. ALTHOUGH THE AFM WOULD GLADLY WELCOME THE CREATION OF A PARTY OR MOVEMENT SUPPORTING THE AFM, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THE ABOLITION OF ANY EXISTING POLITICAL GROUPS, AND HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH UNITARY FORMULAE OR SINGLE PARTIES.

3. FINALLY, THE COMMUNIQUE REFERS TO THE AFM CALL FOR THE POLITICALLY IGNORANT TO CAST BLANK BALLOTS IF THEY CANNOT DECIDE HOW TO VOTE. IF THE AFM RECOMMENDATION IS FOLLOWED, SAYS THE AFM IT WILL BE BETTER ABLE TO JUDGE THE POLITICAL STRUCTURE OF THE COUNTRY. HOWEVER, THE AFM FORMALLY DENIES THAT ITS CALL FOR CASTING OF BLANK BALLOTS WILL BE INTERPRETED LATER AS EITHER VOTES FOR THE AFM OR AS FUTURE POLITICAL CLIENTELE FOR SOME NEW PARTY.

4. COMMENT: THE AFM CONTINUES TO SHOW THAT IT IS SENSITIVE AND THIN SKINNED REGARDING FOREIGN PRESS CRITICISM OF ITS REVOLUTION. UNLIKE THE DOCILE AND UNPROFESSIONAL LOCAL PRESS, THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS PICK UP AND REPORT THE OFTEN CONTRADICTORY OR UNCLEARED STATEMENTS OF DIFFERENT AFM LEADERS, MUCH TO THE CHAGRIN OF THE AFM LEADERSHIP.

5. JESUNO'S DENIAL THAT THE AFM IS CONTEMPLATING A SINGLE PARTY REGIME IS IMPORTANT IN THE LIGHT OF ADM. ROSA COUNTINHO'S RECENT STATEMENTS ABOUT THE NEED FOR A NEW PARTY BETWEEN THE PS AND PCP DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING THE AFM AND ITS PROGRAM. COUTINHO HAS LED MANY TO SUSPECT THAT HE HAS A ONE PARTY STATE IN MIND. JESUINO'S DENIAL IS UNLIKELY TO REASSURE THOSE WHO SEE COUNTINHO'S PROPOSED NEW PARTY IS HAVING THE CAPACITY TO EFFECTIVELY RENDER IMPOTENT THE OTHER PARTIES EVEN IF THEY ARE NOT LEGALLY BANNED.
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